1. **Intro:**

1.1. **Show:** Recyclable water bottle; & Starbucks cup.

1.2. There is a **growing awareness & increasing efforts** to **Recycle**.

1.2.1. We are doing it with just about any product: **Paper, glass, many metals, auto's & trucks & machine parts**, even our old **cell phones**.

1.2.2. Job sites have had a problem with thieves coming through & stripping commercial buildings of all its **copper**.

1.2.3. We now have what’s called **Urban Quarrying** – One old Airport site produced 5,000 tons of secondary aggregate every day as they tore out old concrete & asphalt to reuse it.

1.2.4. It’s really what **thrift stores & garage sales** are all about.

1.2.5. **Dennis Weaver** (of McCloud fame) built his “**Earthship**” in Colorado. It is an environmentally friendly, 10,000 square foot home made of used tires, aluminum cans, & other recycled materials. I may be made of junk but is for sale for $3.3 million.

1.3. I want to talk about **Recycled People** this morning!

1.3.1. **Not like** the 1973 dystopian science fiction movie “**Soylent Green**”.

1.3.2. **The year 2022.** Water/soil poisoned; airborne pollution; year-round heat wave (from green-house effect).

1.3.3. **Robert Thorn** (Charlton Heston; NYPD Det.) sought to crack the case.

1.3.4. **Soy(bean) lent(il)** [Red & yellow **high energy vegetable concentrate**]

1.3.5. **Newest product from Soylent Corp**… “**Soylent Green**”.

1.3.5.1. **Marketed as High energy plankton.** Much more nutritious, but short supply – leads to riots. Ends up being made of cadavers!

1.3.6. **Ok, so not that kind of Recycled People!**

1.4. **Recycle** = To adapt or convert something to a **new use**.

1.5. **God is a master at recycling & reshaping** our lives into **something new**!

1.5.1. God sees the person who exhibits the most misguided, disreputable, & even disgraceful behavior as… **Recyclable**!

1.5.2. **As we** see nearly **anything & everything** as being recyclable; **God** sees **people** as recyclable! [I guess **God is Green**!]

1.6. **Saul** would be such a person. He needed to be **reclaimed & recycled**.

1.6.1. **Recap 9:1-19.**

1.7. **The Christian Life is both individual & social.**

1.7.1. Good example here with Saul. Having an **individual** relationship with **Christ**; & a **social** relationship with **Christians**.

1.7.1.1. A **changed man seeks company among other changed people**!
2. **SAUL! (20-31)**

2.1. **EVANGELISM IN DAMASCUS!** (20-22)

2.2. (20) Immediately Saul began to preach in the synagogues, serving the gospel w/all the zeal he used formerly to persecute it. (Shepherds Notes; pg.33)

2.3. (21,22) Between vs. 21,22 is Gal.1:15-19. [3 yrs in Arabia]

2.3.1. Jesus became the center of Saul’s readjusted worldview.

2.3.2. Some make Jesus the cherry on top of their Sunday. He doesn’t want to “Top off” you life! He wants to be the center of everything.

2.4. (22) This enemy of “The Way” is not showing the Way…the truth & the life!

2.5. **ESCAPE FROM DAMASCUS!** (23-25)

2.6. Large basket (hamper size) – it was let down from window of house built on wall. Similar to Rahab’s house in Jericho built into wall & let 2 spies down through.

2.7. **THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP!** (26-30)

2.8. (26) Afraid & did not believe – painful but natural.

2.8.1. They were skeptical of this “destroyer turn disciple”; this “persecutor turn preacher”;

2.9. Jerusalem - He spent 15 days with Peter & James (Lord’s bro) (Gal.1:18,19)

2.9.1. It was there & then he received his commission as Apostle to the Gentiles – See 22:17-21.

2.10. (27) People are instrumental in the recycling of products. People are instrumental in the recycling of persons.

2.10.1. Like Ananias who was once a reluctant recycler (9:13,14).

2.10.1.1. Just as we sometimes don’t bend over to pick up the penny, or lift the plastic bottle out of the trashcan, because we don’t think its worth it.

2.10.1.2. Same with some people. Sometimes we wonder “is it really worth the effort to pick them up”.

2.10.2. Now Barnabas is used in this process.

2.10.2.1. Barnabas vouches for Saul’s sincerity & effectiveness in Damascus. [Qualifications: Saul had seen the Lord; spoke to Him; & spoken boldly in His Name.]

2.10.3. I like the signs that say, “WE BUY UGLY HOUSES!”

2.10.3.1. What are those entrepreneurs saying? – We’ll buy your shabby run down house for pennies on the dollar, fix it up, & flip it for a handsome profit.

2.10.3.2. What you see as far-too-gone to save, they see promise in every ugly house!
For his own safety they took him to the port city Caesarea & put him on a boat for home. Tarsus his own city(22:3)

2.11.1. Wonder what they thought of this change in his home town?

2.12. **CHURCH GROWTH!** (31)
2.13. When it’s God that moves us, it is best for us for where we’re going, & for those who we leave behind.

2.13.1. They grew **Upward** toward God in edification; They grew **Outward** toward men in multiplication.

2.14. Walking – I love that it says that they were walking (action; movement; momentum)
2.14.1. This is part of a young child’s normal development.

2.15. What 4 things caused growth in these churches throughout this region?


2.16. With Saul now home in Tarsus, the narrative focuses once more with Peter.

2.16.1. After recording the experiences of Stephen, Philip, & Saul.

3. **PETER!** (32-43)

3.1. **AENEAS!** (32-35)
3.2. Peter evangelizes the coastal cities.
3.3. He stopped at Lydda to visit believers there.

3.3.1. Lydda = district capital of Samaria during NT era. (Lod in OT)

3.4. (34) Peter lays emphasis on fact **Christ Himself is healer!** (humility)

3.4.1. Let us hide ourselves behind our Lord.
3.4.2. Maclaren, “The herald is not to blow his own name or praises through his trumpet, but his King’s; & be forgotten when the royal progress has come.”

3.4.2.1. All eyes are on the musician at a wedding…till the bride enters. Then most even turn there back completely on the musician.

3.5. Mothers, a great plaque for your kid’s room! “**Arise & make your bed**”

3.5.1. **Make your bed** = roll up your mat, on which he slept for 8 years.
3.5.2. Immediately doing for himself at last what others must have done for him all that time. [Jesus did same thing in Mark 2:1-12]

3.6. **TABITHA!** (36-43)
3.8. **The Deeds of Dorcas!** (36)
3.9. Tabitha (the Jews would know her by). Luke provides his Greek readers with her name in Greek Dorcas. Gazelle in Aramaic.
3.10. Which she did - She didn’t just talk about doing!

3.10.1. A lovely soul gathered love by giving love! Griffith Thomas
3.11. **The Death of Dorcas!** (37)
She became **ill & died** in the midst of **usefulness & influence**...often so!

3.12. **The Deliverance of Dorcas!** (38-43)
(38) This was a 3 hour journey by foot for Peter.

3.13. (39) **Widows** – another instance of care of widows by Christian Church.

3.14. Showing – (Gk.) Showing as they wore them.

3.15. We all treasure mementos of our deceased loved ones.
But do we express appreciation to the living?

\[\text{It isn't the thing you do, It's the thing you leave undone,}
\text{Which gives you a bit of heartache At the setting of the sun.}
\text{The tender word forgotten, the letter you did not write,}
\text{The flower you might have sent, Are you haunting ghosts tonight.}^{1}\]

3.16. (40) **Knelt down & prayed** – fully aware that healing would **not** come from **him**, but only through the power of **Christ**.

3.17. **Tabitha Arise** – Just like his Master had done at house of Jarius’.

3.18. We find Jesus in the **Hope of the Disciples**!

3.19. Many believed on the Lord – All the results are to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! We find Jesus...

3.20. (43) Why does Luke discuss **Peter** at this point?

3.21. **God sees people as what the may be!** (like 9:15)

3.22. **God is the browser** in an **old estate auction** who happens upon the **rickety old rocking chair** with broken rungs, six cracked and caked coats of black enamel, and assorted springs pushing out through what was once a seat cushion.

---

1 Griffith Thomas; pg.182.
3.23. Remember the story of the Potter and the Clay as told in Jeremiah 18:2-6.

3.23.1. The story says, “The jar did not turn out as he had hoped, so the potter squashed the jar into a lump of clay and started over again” (4)

3.23.2. God is a master at recycling lives and reshaping them into something good and useful. We would do well to see…

3.23.2.1. See ourselves and others as **Reyclable!**

3.23.2.2. See ourselves as **Recyclers!**

3.24. There is no one of too little worth or too far gone to be **reclaimed** and **recycled** for the glory of God and the good of others!